

**Human Right Commission
July 28, 2004 Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Randy Cole, Marie Glaze, Dee Campbell-Carter, Glenn Glasgow, Lawrence Morganfield III

Members Excused: David Finke, Valeta Snell

Staff Present: Phil Steinhaus, Fred Boeckmann, Nanette C.M. Ward

- I. Call to Order/Introductions:** Campbell-Carter called the meeting to order and introductions were made.
- II. Approval of Agenda:** Glaze moved to approve the agenda as written. The motion was seconded by Glasgow and passed by a unanimous vote.
- III. Approval of 6/23/04 Meeting Minutes:** Glaze moved to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Glasgow and passed by a unanimous vote.

IV. Old Business

- A. Study Circles Report:** Ward shared evaluations from the June Community Circle program, "Youth Speak" which was a "listen-in circle".

Campbell-Carter expressed her appreciation for the Youth Speak Community Circle. It had a big impact on her nephew who attended. She also shared a conversation she had with another bi-racial youth who attended. He felt that others listened to him and accepted him.

Ward said that adults who attended expressed optimism about the youth in our community and hope for the future leaders of tomorrow. Campbell-Carter added that she felt all youth benefited from the program, even those from affluent families.

Ward said that is the power of the study circle program, having real impact on individual lives. She shared that Rock Bridge High School students also attended and expressed interest in starting a student study circle program at Rock Bridge High School.

Ward shared evaluation cards from the July Community Circle program. They indicated a very positive experience by participants.

Ward mentioned that Aimee Wehmeier from State Farm has been meeting with Federal Express about how the study circles programs was being implemented as a diversity training program at State Farm. Federal Express is interested in possibly using the model for their own diversity training program.

Ward shared that Phoenix Programs had also conducted a study circle experience with their employees and found it very beneficial. Phoenix Programs is considering additional discussion groups in the future.

Ward reported that the next community circles will be held on Thursday, August 26 and Monday, September 27 at 6:00 p.m. at the library.

- B. **Roots of Racism III Conference: August 11 – 13, 2004:** Steinhaus reported that he has completed registrations for Campbell-Carter, Morganfield and Finke. Ward may also attend.

V. New Business

- A. **Creating a Multicultural Community: Paxton Keeley Elementary School Program Report:** Steinhaus passed around copies of the final report to share with commissioners. This program was conducted with funding assistance from the commission's Human Rights Enhancement Program.
- B. **AHANA 2004 Journalism Workshop Update:** Steinhaus passed around the program brochure from the workshop which listed the commission as a financial supporter. This program also received funding assistance from the commission's Human Rights Enhancement Program.
- C. **FY2005 Human Rights Enhancement Program RFP:** Steinhaus passed around the FY2005 Request for Proposals and application forms for review. The RFP was approved by the commission. Steinhaus will publicize the program and post the RFP and additional information to the commission's web site.

VI. Staff Reports

- A. **Community Services:** Steinhaus reviewed several news articles and the commission roster that were contained in commissioner's folders. Steinhaus also reviewed the organization of the new investigative notebooks. Commissioners appreciated the new notebooks.
- B. **Law Department:** No report.
- C. **Investigator/Community Educator:** Ward reported on an incident where a person with a disability which required the use of a service dog was charged an extra rental deposit for having the dog. The landlord refused to waive the deposit even with medical documentation. Ward shared that this situation was settled quickly with the Missouri Commission on Human Rights, so no complaint was filed with the Human Rights Commission. The complainant was very appreciative of the help she received from the commission.

- VII. **Closed Session:** Glaze moved to go into closed session to discuss pending cases. Motion was seconded by Glasgow and a roll-call vote was taken. Campbell-Carter called the roll with the following vote: Glasgow, yes; Glaze, yes; Campbell-Carter, yes; Cole, yes; Morganfield, yes.

- VIII. **Public Comment:** Bruce Alspaugh introduced himself as the Chair of LGBT Coalition. He shared that it is a coalition of various other organizations including PFLAG, campus groups, etc. Their focus is education on LGBT issues.

Alspaugh encouraged commission members to vote “no” on the upcoming Constitutional Amendment 2 proposal to ban gay marriage. He said that it would also prohibit full access to spousal benefits between same-sex couples.

In addition, he shared information about this year’s “Pride Fest” which was held in June and was the first time the coalition sponsored on the event. There were many community booths and other activities at the festival. He hopes the commission can attend next year and have a community booth. The festival is scheduled for June 11, 2005.

Steinhaus shared that the commission had had a community booth at past festivals but was not able to do so this year due to scheduling conflicts.

Alspaugh reported that the coalition did encounter a problem this year with the rental of the public park shelter which had a conditional use permit did not allow for donations, charging fees (vending) etc. He said this caused problems because in year’s past the festival paid for itself through food sales and donations. Since this was the first time the LGBT Coalition sponsored the event they were not aware that this was a prohibited activity. The coalition had to scramble to secure limited financial donations to prior to the event since they were not able to collect money at the event.

Boeckmann asked if he had contacted the City Council about the issue. He said the issue was brought up at the last City Council meeting. Alspaugh said he had contacted the Mayor about the issue. He added that not being able to accept funds caused food problems as they couldn’t sell food to cover food and event costs. People attending also wanted to make donations to Jesse Valencia’s family.

Boeckmann said he will check on status of City Council action on this issue.

Alspaugh said the Heritage Festival charges for concessions and he would be willing to partner with the city if need be in future years.

- IX. Commissioner Comment:** Glaze noted the article about Columbia Public Schools cutting diversity programs while increasing administrative salaries. Glaze said she was very unhappy about these priorities and will discuss them with the Columbia Public School Board as well.

Campbell-Carter shared her appreciation for the work of the commission and said that the commission continues to move forward and is providing good community programs. She encouraged the commission to keep this momentum going.

- X. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phil Steinhaus, Manager
Office of Community Services